

# Planning & Sustainability - City of Northampton

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## The Northampton Zoning Board

Minutes of Meeting

January 8, 2026 (Approved on February 12, 2026)

Zoning Board Meeting 5:30 PM VIA ZOOM Teleconference

Members Present:		Time
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	David Bloomberg, Chair,	5:30 pm
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Elizabeth Silver, Vice Chair	5:30 pm
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maureen Scanlon, Member	5:30 pm
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sherry Taylor, Associate Member	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Erinn Ervin, Associate Member	5:30 pm
Staff Present		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Carolyn Misch, Director, Office of Planning and Sustainability	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nathan Chung, Land Use Planner, Office of Planning and Sustainability	5:30 pm

### Board Opens the Hearing

Quorum of three members of the board required for the hearing achieved.

**5:33 PM** Bloomberg made announced that the meeting is being Video Recorded. Bloomberg introduced the board members present, which was everyone except for Taylor. Bloomberg opened for general public comments not about the specific agenda item. There was no public comment.

**5:33 PM** Bloomberg opened the findings hearing for constructing 10 solar canopies with utilities in addition to existing nonconforming auto salvage use by Parallel Products Solar Energy, LLC at 182 Mt Tom Rd, Map ID 39-39. Record ID LU-25-25.

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- Findings Permit: Simple Majority Vote Required 2 out of 3 Members. This is a discretionary permit. The Board must find that the proposed change to a nonconforming dual use will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming use.
- Applicable Code Sections: 350-9.2B (Link: <https://ecode360.com/11957609>); 350-9.3A(8)
- Hearing Publication Dates: December 23 and December 31, 2025

Present from the applicant's party was Michael Mineau (attorney), Kelley O'Donnell (attorney), Scott Daggett (project engineer), and Phil Cavallo (Applicant company, Parallel Solar Products).

Mineau introduced the applicant's party and presented as follows. The application is for a findings permit for installing 10 solar canopies. The subject property has nonconforming auto salvage use, and the proposed use would provide for dual use. The applicant reduced the number of vehicles to clean up the site to make it more orderly and more aesthetically pleasing. Mineau mentioned that the proposal has already received Conservation Commission approval with conditions.

Daggett, project manager for Farland Corp representing Parallel Products Solar **shared the site plan, "Site Plans - 182 Mt. Tom Rd - 4926-9015-3600 v1.pdf", and presented more details as follows.** The applicant made site improvements that led to Conservation Commission approval for 10 solar canopies with a fifty-foot buffer zone. The project would require the owner to remove the cars for solar canopy installation and put the cars back in a neater fashion.

The Board and the applicants discussed the possibility of more drawings and conditioning a buffer. The board expressed the preference for elevation and rendition drawings. Members reasoned that the drawings would show how the proposal would look from the street to help the board make its decision. Bloomberg expressed support for the project as an improvement while noting the value of the renditions. The applicant shared the photographs of other projects in Medford, MA and Dartmouth, MA.

Silver asked about the slope of the solar canopy. Cavallo described a 3 to 5 degree tilt for each array that goes up toward the north.

Bloomberg asked if the proposal would have lighting visible from Rt 5/Mount Tom Rd. Cavallo said no.

Bloomberg asked Chung if they had comments from departments or the public. Chung said there was none except for one member of the public asking for links to the application package.

Bloomberg brought up the possibility of continuing the hearing to allow for renderings. Cavallo expressed flexibility to the suggestion while noting the long period of permitting so far. Cavallo raised concern about buffers affecting the performance of the solar canopy.

**Silver made the motion to continue the hearing to February 12, 2026 at 5:30pm and Scanlon seconded.** The board requested the applicant to provide renderings before the hearing to see how the installation would appear from Mt. Tom Rd. The board declined to set a hard delivery deadline but

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asked for the drawings as soon as reasonably possible. Silver asked for measurements such as heights of and distances between canopies. Mineau said that he would discuss details with Daggett.

**6:26 PM** Board members Bloomberg, Silver, and Scanlon unanimously voted by roll call to continue.

## Board Reviews Minutes and Other Matters

**6:27 PM** The board reviewed the minutes for the hearing on 12/11/2025.

Silver made the motion to approve the minutes. Scanlon seconded. All four members of the board present unanimously voted yes by roll call.

The board raised general procedural questions about whether neighbor consent is dispositive. Chung said no, noting that neighbor consent cannot overrule the legal criteria. The board and Chung discussed the possibility of executive sessions about an ongoing lawsuit.

Board discussed time slots in February selected by the members for the election of the chair and the vice chair. Silver preferred 2/26 if a hearing will be scheduled for that day but was fine with 2/12. All but Taylor noted availability in an online form for both dates.

Chung said that there would be two hearings on 2/12 – continuation of the 182 Mt Tom Rd application and a new findings application. Chung said that he will put down 6pm as the time for the new findings application.

## Board Adjourns

**6:37 PM** Upon motion by Scanlon and second by Ervin, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to adjourn.

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